

BARRAGE

The RCA Museum News

THE RCA MUSEUM
CANADA'S NATIONAL ARTILLERY MUSEUM



LE MUSÉE NATIONAL DE L'ARTILLERIE DU CANADA
LE MUSÉE DE L'ARC

January 2017

Repainted 2S3 and Abbot



The RCA Museum had contractors repaint the two self-propelled artillery pieces pictured above in the Gun Park: a Russian 2S3 152mm and a British Abbot 105mm. We expect the new paint to last twenty years.

*Don't put your fingers
in your ears*

GUN DEAFNESS is much more easily and effectively prevented by the use of HARBUTT'S

Fibrous PLASTICINE

A small piece made into plugs placed in the ears cuts up the nerve-shattering concussions of gun fire in Battery action, and the intense crashing of incessantly bursting shells.

Strong tin pocket cases, 8d. and 1/3 post paid. Extra if sent to the Expeditionary Forces—3d. on the small box, and 9d. on the large.

HARBUTT'S
PLASTICINE, Ltd.,
78, Bathampton, BATH.

"AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY FOR THE GUNNERS."



WW1 Advertisement

Firing artillery without hearing protection causes hearing damage. WW1 frontline soldiers could not escape the constant firing and explosions from artillery shells and belt fed small arms weaponry. The noise produced from constant shelling was deafening and commonly caused permanent hearing loss.

I found this advertisement in a copy of *Field Gunnery: A Practical Manual Prepared with Special Reference to the Heavies* published in 1916. The advice in the ad sounds perfectly reasonable: "Don't put your fingers in your ears". WW1 Gunners commonly did not wear ear protection and many had significant hearing loss over the course of the war. Hearing protection was not "an absolute necessity for the gunners". In the midst of battle, wearing hearing protection was secondary to basic survival. An estimated 30 thousand British soldiers became deaf on the frontlines from artillery and small arms fire.

The Royal Canadian Artillery Museum
CFB Shilo, P.O. Box 5000, Station Main
Shilo, Manitoba, R0K 2A0

Website: rcamuseum.com
Facebook: The RCA Museum

Musée de l'Artillerie royale canadienne
BFC Shilo, C. P. 5000, succursale Main
Shilo (Manitoba) R0K 2A0

Canadian Military Vehicles

The RCA Museum is currently displaying in our temporary exhibit space light trucks and jeeps covering 100 years of mechanization in the Canadian Forces.

There is no question that the adoption and evolution of the light truck and jeep changed the nature of war over the last 100 years. As war became faster, with soldiers on wheels rather than on foot or horseback, a reliance on mechanization developed. The RCA Museum will run this vehicle display until 10 March 2017.



Brandon Santa Claus Parade



This year the RCA Museum participated in the Brandon Santa Claus Parade. We displayed a Bren Gun Carrier covered with Christmas ornaments, colorful lights and a sound system. We are fortunate to have a running World War II, Universal Carrier (Bren Gun Carrier) in our collection.

Thank you Mr. Love, our Mechanic, for all your hard work in decorating and driving the vehicle during the parade. We also displayed the parade vehicle in front of M101, our storage facility, for the month of December 2016.

Director's Note

I am delighted to share with you our new issue of the Barrage. We had a good year in 2016. The museum reported 5318 visitors, and tens-of-thousands saw our displays during outreach events. We acquired an immaculate World War One 13 pounder QF gun, as well as a number of other interesting artefacts. Back in January 1962, Brigadier General P.A.S. Todd, the Colonel Commandant of The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery opened a much smaller RCA Museum. From this small beginning, the museum has expanded significantly, but our focus on telling the story of The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery and of the Canadian gunner has remained the same. In January 2017, I certainly look forward to continuing this tradition.

McCrae Printing Plate

Every year on November 11th, Remembrance Day, we have a memorial honouring those who have served Canada in past wars. We wear the poppy as a symbol of sacrifice for military personnel that died in war. The idea for the poppy came from the poem *In Flanders Fields*, written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae.

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae was a physician with the Royal Canadian Artillery. “Dinky” Morrison, or Major General Sir Edward Morrison, had a number of senior commanding roles in the Canadian army and was a journalist by trade. During the Battle of Vimy Ridge he was responsible for directing all of the Allied artillery. Both McCrae and Morrison served together in the same artillery unit during the Boer War and both served in the 1st Brigade during WW1. John McCrae wrote *In Flanders Fields*, following the deaths of Lt. Alexis Helmer and Lt. Owen Hague, who both died during the 2nd Battle of Ypres on 2 May 1915. Morrison encouraged McCrae to get the poem published. Another military physician, Captain Francis Scrimger, VC, also encouraged McCrae to submit for publication. The poem was first published in *Punch* on 8 December 1915 and was later published worldwide. Only Morrison survived the war: John McCrae died 28 January 1918.



Above is one of the illustrations made by Major General Morrison depicting a small cemetery near the location of the 2nd Battle of Ypres, in Belgium, in May 1915.

We had good attendance at the museum on Remembrance Day with 172 people. In our National Artillery Gallery, we display an original printing plate of the poem *In Flanders Fields* that matched a hand written personal note by John McCrae to Major General Edward Morrison in 1918. Major General Morrison, one of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery's Great Gunners, had a printing plate made of the handwritten poem, and later used the prints for charitable purposes. We are very fortunate to have this original plate, which has been in our collection since the founding of the RCA Museum in 1962.

ZPU-4 Refurbishment

Millco Steel Ltd recently stripped and repainted the museum's Russian anti-aircraft heavy machine gun. Please note the picture below.



The ZPU is a family of Russian designed anti-aircraft machine guns used by over fifty countries, not including Canada. There are four main variants: the quadruple-barreled ZPU-4 (which The RCA Museum exhibits), two double-barreled (ZPU-2 and ZU-2) and a single barreled version the ZPU-1. Each barrel is air cooled with a maximum firing rate of 600 rounds per minute. The ZPU-4 employs a four-wheeled carriage and is still currently in use around the world.

Service on the RCA Board

Dr. Gervan Fearon, the current President of Brandon University, recently stepped down from the RCA Museum Board. On 2 November 2016 we presented him with a framed print depicting *RCA, A Battery, circa 1889*. Dr. Fearon is standing in the center. To the left, is our Chairperson of the RCA Museum Board, Hon. Colonel Rick Felstead CSTJ, CD, and to the right, Shilo Base Commander LCol John Cochrane. We certainly appreciate Dr. Fearon's service and hard work on our board.



A World War II vet, Retired LCol and Professor Robert Spencer, from Ottawa, Ontario, recently visited our museum. LCol Spencer wrote the "History of the Fifteen Canadian Field Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery" in 1945. In this manuscript, he covers the history of the 15 Field Regiment during the Second World War, notably in Western Europe. During our tour, he was interested to see our Gun Park and museum artifacts. He pointed out the small arms that he remembered, including a Lee-Enfield No. 4 Mk 1 rifle and Sten Mk 2 9mm submachine gun. Regarding artillery, he mentioned practicing on Canadian soil with a converted 18 pounder with a carriage supported by rubber tires. He was most impressed with our displayed 25 pounder. He mentioned operating one very similar to our museum gun during the Second World War. He asked if we had the original manual listing the placement of the six Canadian gunners on the gun and I showed him our archives and a copy of the Gun Drill manual for Mark II, 25 pounder published in 1941.

In the archives, I presented him with our file on the 15th Canadian Field Regiment. At the RCA Museum, we have files on most of the WWII Canadian artillery regiments. The file contained: a photocopy of his published book on the 15th Canadian Field Regiment, photocopies of official war diaries, and a selection of photocopied cartoons illustrated by Lt. A. Damer of the 15th Field Regiment. LCol Spencer remembered both the cartoons and Lt. Damer.

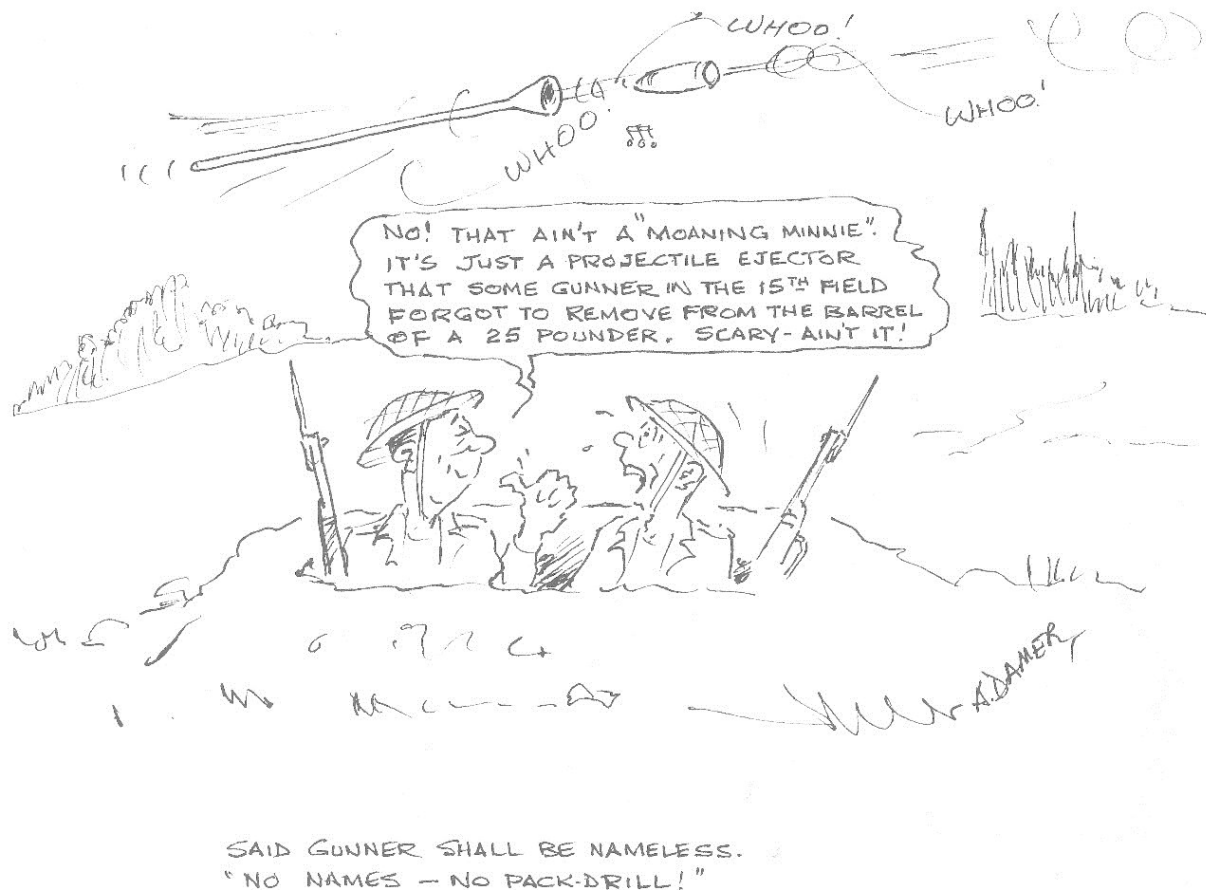


In another one of his publications, *A European Affair*, on his time in Europe with the 15th Field Regiment, he wrote "...it was often difficult to write history when one was making it!" He was exposed to shelling and nightly raids in Cormelles, France, just one month after D-Day. He wrote, "Our job was to say alive, and so to be able to see that the guns provided the support required by the infantry and armour." The 15th Field Regiment used the 25-pounder, mark II in Western Europe "to provide supporting fire in depth, the guns

were deployed as far forward as possible, often exposed to enemy observation and direct fire.” The 15th Field Regiment was one of many Canadian Regiments that helped win the war effort in Western Europe.

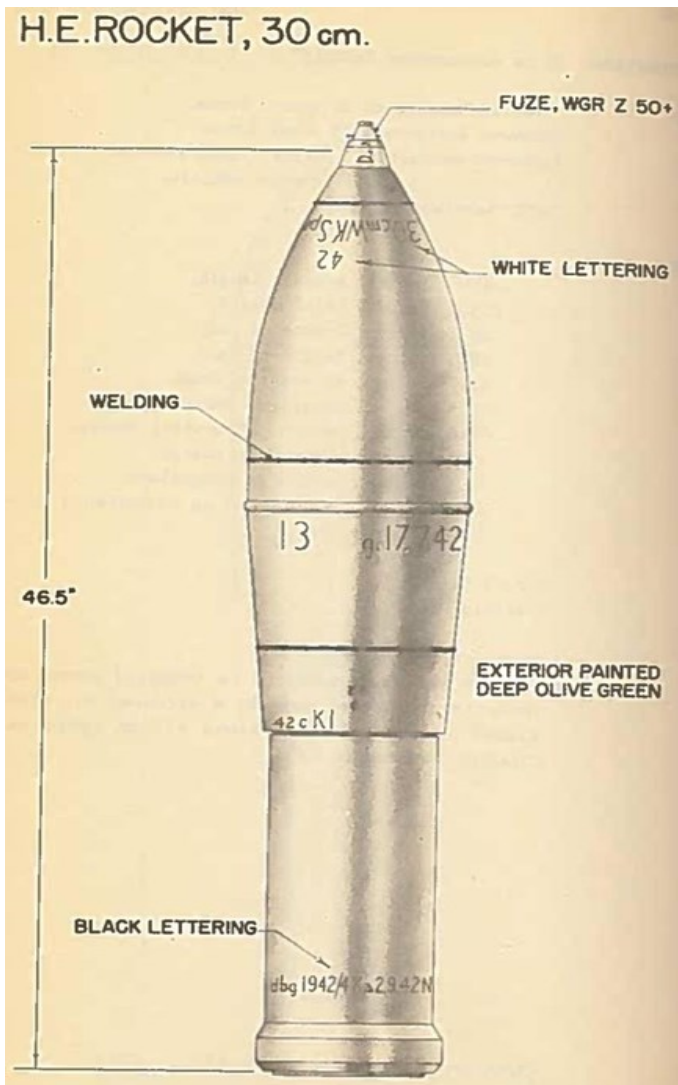
After the museum tour, LCol Spencer conducted a taped oral history with our museum staff, Kathleen Christensen and Clive Prothero-Brooks, on his WWII experiences as an Officer with The Royal Canadian Artillery. He also signed a copy of his regimental history book.

Moaning Minnie



While visiting our Gun Park, LCol Spencer asked to see a German multiple rocket launcher from WW2 and mentioned how deadly they became for the 15th Canadian Field Regiment. The Moaning Minnie were the spin-stabilized H. E. Rockets (high explosive) fired from either Nebelwerfers or Raketenwerfers, which came in different sizes from 10cm in diameter up to 30cm. Both the Nebelwerfers and Raketenwerfers were widely used by the German forces during WWII. The rocket received this nickname due to its distinctive sound during flight - a loud shrill howling noise. The RCA Museum has one incredibly rare 30cm Raketenwerfer 56 that fired a 30cm H. E. Rocket or Moaning Minnie.

Note the picture to the right. The 30cm Raketenwerfer 56 could fire six, 30cm or 15cm rockets. Our example of the 30cm Raketenwerfer may be the only one that exists in Canada. After the conclusion of WW2 in 1945, as part of the 1st Canadian Army Museum Collection Team, Captain Farley Mowat, who later became a famous Canadian author, was charged with the collection of captured and/or abandoned Germany armaments. The RCA Museum can account for twelve WW2 artillery pieces



collected by Farley Mowat.

In Captain Mowat's manifest of guns, circa 1946, there is only one listing for any Nebelwerfer or Raketenwerfer coming to Canada. The entry is for a 28/32 cm Nebelwerfer. Mowat most likely made a mistake and mislabeled the 30cm Raketenwerfer that currently stands in our gun park. LCol Spencer noted in his memoirs that "multiple-barrelled mortars which we nick-named 'Moaning Minnies,' were responsible for some 70% of all Allied casualties." Certainly, the H. E. Rockets fired from the Nebelwerfers and Raketenwerfers accounted for a large percentage of Allied casualties.

In our museum archives, I found an original WW2 publication from 1944 listing German projectiles and fuses. On the topic of H. E. Rockets (*Wurfkörper 42 Spreng explosive missile*, compatible with the 30cm Raketenwerfer 56, I found this picture of a 30cm H. E. Rocket or "Moaning Minnie" that used a percussion primer, with a listed overall length of 46.5 inches, weight 275 pounds and range of 2,440 yards. For more information on these weapon systems visit our museum or website at rcamuseum.com.

RCA MUSEUM: APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP or RENEWAL

	TYPE	COST	BENEFITS
_____	Individual	\$ 30.00 / yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free Admission; - Newsletter; and - Invitations to special events
_____	Family (individual, spouse, children under 18 yrs)	\$ 50.00 / yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free Admission; - Newsletter; and - Invitations to special events
_____	Association/ Corporate	\$ 300.00 / yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newsletter; - Director's Tour of RCA Museum and collection (max 20 participants); and - Association/corporate members may purchase Museum memberships at half price

Thank you for your support!

All donations are promptly processed and a tax receipt provided.

Name / Nom: _____

Address / Adresse: _____

City / Ville: _____ Province / Province: _____

Postal Code / Code postal: _____ Phone / Téléphone: _____

Email address /email adresse: _____

Do you wish to unsubscribe from receiving the newsletters, information and updates by email from the RCA Museum? ____ Yes or ____ No

Contact Us

Telephone : 204-765-3000 Ext. 3570
 Fax: (204) 765-5289
 Email: rcamusemts.net
 Website: rcamuseum.com

**The Royal Canadian
 Artillery Museum**
 Building N-118
 CFB Shilo
 P.O. 5000, Station Main
 Shilo, Manitoba R0K 2A0

**Musée de l'Artillerie royale
 canadienne**
 Building N-118
 CFB Shilo
 P.O. 5000, Station Main
 Shilo, Manitoba R0K 2A0

Telephone : 204-765-3000 poste 3570
 Facsimile : 204-765-5289
 Courriel : rcamuse@mts.net
 Site Web : rcamuseum.com

Pour nous joindre

Director/Directeur	Andrew Oakden	Ext/poste 3763
Senior Curator/Conservatrice principale	Kathleen Christensen	Ext/poste 3531
Assistant Curator/Conservatrice adjointe	Dayna Barscello	Ext/poste 3577
Collections Manager/Gestionnaire des collections	Clive Prothero-Brooks	Ext/poste 4066
Admin Coordinator/Coordonnatrice administrative	Cheryl van der Raadt	Ext/poste 4563
Front Desk/reception	Denise/Anita	Ext/poste 3570